



STATE OF WASHINGTON
WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF HEALTH

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January 10, 2007

TO: Washington State Board of Health Members

FROM: Keith Higman, WSBOH Member

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF CHAPTER 246-215 WAC, FOOD SERVICE

Background and Summary

In September 2004, the Board adopted major revisions to Chapter 246-215 WAC, Food Service. The revisions adopted the 2001 FDA Food Code (the most current at the time) by reference, with some modifications based on recommendations from a statewide advisory committee. Rule development involved more than 50 stakeholder committee meetings and public workshops over a three year period.

At the time of adoption, the Board asked the Department of Health (DOH) to report back by 2006 about any implementation difficulties. DOH and food safety partners reported in December 2005 that a few minor issues had been identified but those were being resolved through discussion, code clarification, and education. Food industry association representatives said they were hearing concerns from members about requirements for no bare hand contact with ready-to-eat foods and replacement of refrigerators within five years if they cannot hold 41°F. The Board asked DOH for an update on implementation issues after another year.

DOH and the Department of Social and Health Services enforce food service rules in health care and custodial care facilities. Local health jurisdictions enforce the rules in most establishments. They license and inspect food service in restaurants, markets, schools, community fairs, and many other places where food is served to the public. The 2004 revision became effective May 2, 2005. Local health agency personnel and members of the regulated community have spent many hours in training and conducting training for others. A major focus of this effort continues to be implementation of the rules in a consistent manner statewide.

Nancy Napolilli, Director of the Office of Environmental Health and Safety, is here to discuss ongoing implementation of the food service rule. Also here today to provide other perspectives on rule implementation are Anthony Anton, Washington Restaurant Association; Jan Gee, Washington Food Industry; and Tony Barrett, Lewis County Public Health, representing local directors of environmental health.

Recommended Board Action

No action recommended at this time.